

# Promising yet Precarious Pathways

## Filipino Trainees' Articulations of Aspirations and Projections of Future in Japan

**Thursday 23 June 2022 13:00-14:30**

**3rd Floor, Mid-size Meeting Room Inamori Bldg**

Even though on paper, Japan still does not have an official foreign worker program for unskilled workers, the Technical Internship Training Program (TITP) has become the country's stand-in mechanism to employ temporary migrants to small and medium-sized enterprises in dire need of laborers under the guise of skills and technology transfer. Recent expansion of TITP shows that the Japanese government sees the program as a permanent strategy to address the projected problems of a super-aging society, i.e. labor shortage and care crisis. Despite this, there are still anxieties about how the massive influx of foreigners might disrupt the nation's social harmony down the line. Amid these contested visions of future from the host society, I examine how foreign workers themselves, particularly Filipino trainees in Japan, construct and envision their own future as they navigate and negotiate not just the particularities of temporary migratory landscape but also the many shifts and changes in the policies that condition their stay in the country. Through in-depth interviews, this presentation explores how Filipino trainees articulate their 'capacity to aspire' (Appadurai 2013) amid the risks and prospects of the shifting temporalities of their work and life in Japan brought about by the many changes and developments through the TITP.

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Discussant: Mario Lopez (CSEAS)



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Carlos M. Pocos III is a literary and cultural studies scholar from De La Salle University. His research interest revolves around stories of migration and mobilities and he has published widely on diaspora's connection to literature and cinema, gender and sexuality, and social movements and transnationalism in international peer-reviewed journals. His book, *Narratives, Affect and Politics of Southeast Asian Migration*, was published by Routledge in 2021 and he has also edited and translated into Filipino an anthology of Indonesian migrant women's fiction, which was published in 2020. His recent studies focus on narratives and experiences of migrant workers in Asia, touching up on issues of intimate citizenship, aspirations, belonging, politics of care and community building.